



## BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

PAKISTAN

General Mirza Aslam BEG

January 1989

(U) NAME: General (GEN) Mirza Aslam Beg, Pakistan Army, SN: 4064. (variant: Baig).

(U) POSITION: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Pakistan Army since August 1988. General Beg succeeded General Zia-ul-Haq. Concurrently, Beg is Colonel Commandant of Sind Regiment since February, 1986.



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(U) Beg is widely believed to feel that the military, which consumes 50% of the country's budget, has been weakened by its constant involvement in politics and diversion from its strictly military tasks, and that a return to the barracks is the only way to restore full professionalism to the armed forces. President Ghulam Ishaq Khan is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, General Beg is the Chief of Army Staff, and Prime Minister Bhutto will most likely hold the defense portfolio. It is unclear which will have the last say on how much money will be allocated to defense in the federal budget.

(U) A theme of regional defense cooperation has been openly advocated by General Beg for sometime, particularly as it would involve a "regional consensus" or regional security agreement between Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, and Afghanistan against regional hegemony through India's growing military capabilities. Beg further advocates formation of a regional defense production cooperative between the same four countries.

(U) PERSONAL DATA: Mirza Aslam Beg was born on 2 August 1931 in Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh, India. He is 5'8" tall, weighs between 150 and 170 lb, and has a medium build with erect posture. He is married and has two daughters and a son. Beg's wife was treated at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center during mid-1981. General Beg is a graduate of Allahabad University (IN) and is a keen sportsman; he likes to play golf, tennis and squash, and was captain of his college field hockey team. He reads, writes, and speaks fluent English and Urdu. Both he and his wife are Bihari, immigrants from India, and are practicing Sunni Muslims. He arrived in Pakistan in 1948 with his wife and several members of both their families.